



Let's Read National Early Literacy Campaign Ambassadors Liz Ellis and Jay Laga'aia read with children in the park in Sydney.

Current research tells us that almost half of Australian adults do not have the literacy skills to meet the demands of everyday life and work. It is well documented that an individual's literacy levels affect their opportunities in life for education, employment, income, and wellbeing. Learning to read lays the foundation for future learning and the early years from birth to age five are critical for building the emergent literacy skills that precede learning to read and write.

We also know that:

- Not all children arrive at school ready to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided at school. In Australia, 23.6% of children are developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains of development
- Many families are not aware of the importance of promoting their children's early literacy or the strategies to use to ensure its development
- Year 4 children ranked 27th out of 45 countries in reading making us making us one the lowest ranked English-speaking country in the world

We believe that the best way to equip children for their future is by helping them build a solid language and literacy foundation before school. Fortunately, the federal government has

equipped us with a unique opportunity to promote this national.

Let's Read National Early Years Literacy Campaign
In July 2012 the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funded the Murdoch Children's Research Institute to implement a 12 month Let's Read National Early Literacy Campaign. This

campaign aims to develop and generate national, integrated early year's literacy promotion and support activities so all children from 0–5 years gain the foundation skills for subsequent language, literacy, and learning success. Using a multi-tiered and ecological approach to engage families, professionals, and communities to promote high quality, early literacy environments for children aged 0–5 years. The Let's Read campaign tagline anywhere anytime is a call to action for families and caregivers to share words, rhymes, songs, stories, and books everyday with their children from birth.

The Hon. Peter Garrett MP officially launched the Let's Read campaign at the 2012 QEC International Conference. During National Playgroup Week 17-24 March 2013 the Let's Read campaign is collaborating with Playgroup Australia to encourage playgroups and families across the country to participate in early years literacy promotion activities including: dialogue reading activities with Let's Read books; cultural storytelling, singing and nursery rhymes; Let's Read anywhere anytime activities such as using words, letters and sounds in everyday environment.

In April 2013 the Let's Read campaign will publicly launch across Australia. Campaign Ambassadors Jay Laga'aia of Playschool and Star Wars fame, and former Australian netball captain Liz Ellis will support the dissemination of public messages and social marketing that promotes the importance of early literacy across the country. Following the launch the campaign radio community

service announcement will commence broadcasting nationally in English and 21 community languages. In addition, thirty-three high profile Australians have also come onboard as campaign Champions promoting the Let's Read campaign messages and call to action.

Let's Read has also developed a joint venture with Love2Read and United Way as part of the National Early Literacy Campaign. The joint venture will collectively promote the call for action on early literacy across Australia using respective campaign resources and tools.

Let's Read tools and resources support families to read anywhere and anytime with children every day from birth. The 2013 resources, available for free download from the Let's Read website, include

- Reading tip sheets with information to guide families to sharing books, songs, stories words and rhymes with their children in an age appropriate, effective and enjoyable way
- Book suggestion lists to help families select and read books with their children;
- Reading with young children Information Sheet
- Campaign poster series

The new Let's Read DVD featuring Leah Vandenberg and Alex Papps has simple and practical tips on how families can enjoy books with their children from birth will be available to purchase soon.

To learn more about upcoming Online Training for Professionals, the Community Program, early literacy research and development, connect with the Let's Read campaign:

- Visit our website: www.letsread.com.au
- Join the Let's Read mailing list tailored newsletters: www.letsread.com.au/Contact-Us/Mailing-list
- Contact us: www.letsread.com.au/Contact-Us

To learn more about the Let's Read campaign, visit www.letsread.com.au.

